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THE Hindu Message

A Weekly Review of Indian and World=Problems from the Hindu Standpoint.

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Contents of No. 19.

1. A Vision of India. The Hill Vegetation. (A Poem) By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L. 309
2. The Modern Political Shibboleth. 310
3. Notes and Comments. 311
4. Random Jottings. By Son of India. 313
5. Bhagavad Gita with an English exposition—K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L. 314
6. Musings from the Maharatta Capital. From our own Correspondent. 316
7. Sri Sankaracharya and the "Karma Marga.— By N. K. Venkatesan 321
8. Olla Podrida. 323

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THE

"HINDU MESSAGE"

A Weekly Review of Indian and World-Problems from the Hindu Standpoint.

Editor: T. K. Balasubrahmanya Aiyar B.A.

VOL. 4.] THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 4, 1919. [No. 19.

The **Hindu Message** stands for

(1) The Maintenance of British supremacy with self-government for India,

(2) Co-operation with the different communities of India without prejudice to Hindu Dharma,

(3) Education of the Hindus as an integral part of the Indian Nation,

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A Vision Of India.

THE HILL VEGETATION.

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

Upon the lofty hills, the green-robed spires
Of tall acacias rise to meet the skies;
A gentle breeze doth pass with tremulous sighs
Through pines beneath the sun's caressing fires.
While with a wakefulness that never tires
Gaunt bluegum trees upon the hill-tops rise
As stand unfettered by mere earthly ties
A heavenward-gazing band of thin-clad friars.
Anon a fleecy mist glides in and out
Amidst the trees; anon like corpse-cloth white
It hides from sight the hill's reposeful form
Anon it rolls away and veers about
And doth disclose to our enraptured sight
The rainbow-tinted plains with sunlight warm.

The Hindu Message

THURSDAY EVENING AUGUST 4, 1919.

The Modern Political Shibboleth.

"Down with the caste, down with the Brahmin"—such is the cry heard all round nowadays, both in season and out of season, suggested not only as a remedy for all the evils India is subject to but also as the means of India's attaining her desired emancipation politically, socially, economically etc. It is suggested openly that the day the caste system is abolished and the Brahmin is trampled under foot the millennium would dawn in India. People have not stopped to consider the *rationale* of the cry but go on adopting it as it suits their immediate purpose. How far this cry is justified by our past history is not the thing that troubles the minds of these wiseacres. They have not understood the fact that the germs of caste are in the instinctive and not in the self-conscious age of man. So far as the Hindu Society is concerned the caste system, traces of which we find even in the oldest passages of the Rig-Veda itself, has been brought to a perfection whereby all people worked in a spirit of co-operation for the cause of the common good. When this system was in full swing, we have historical evidence that India flourished beautifully well with its representative institutions, electoral franchise and village communities. The four castes considered themselves as members of one organisation and the question of superiority or inferiority never entered into their heads. Spiritual greatness and emancipation of the soul was the only goal aimed at and none felt any grievance in the system. This caste-system is the fundamental basis on which the Hindu Society is built and to cry that it should disappear is to spell the ruin of the Hindu Society. With the disappearance of the caste the Hindu religion goes, and with the disappearance of the Hindu religion the Hindu Society and the Hindu home also vanish. When everything Hindu is gone and when India is no more a Hindu India what shall it gain by political emancipation? If political freedom is to be the result of the destruction of our caste system we would rather like to forego it and remain as we are instead of hankering after an imaginary state of tranquillity. We say 'imaginary' advisedly, for what do we find in countries where their exists no caste system? Do we find peace there? On the other hand those countries are full of party strifes, class hatreds, labour strikes, internecine conflicts and economic bankruptcy. Class divisions are rampant and wealth lords it over all. The greatest war of the world, destroying millions of human lives and disabling millions of others was fought in those countries only and the resulting confusion, immorality and distress are simply appalling. Words fail adequately to describe the horrors perpetrated there and all boasted equality has come to nothing. Inequalities are perpetuated in the name of expediency and equity and ethics are thrown aside in the name of diplomacy. These things, horrible to contemplate, were unknown to us in India in the best days of the caste system when India had fully developed

self-governing institutions. We admit that the system has now fallen from its high ideals and the fault of it lies in us and not in the system. The duty of every one of us is to purify the system from its encrustations and not to denounce it. This foolish shibboleth raised by the modern-day politicians without any regard to rhyme or reason should be despised as the most dangerous and suicidal course that we could adopt. Neither the caste system nor the Brahmin has anything to do with our present political condition the causes for which have to be sought elsewhere. The wreckers of our society have thought this to be a good opportunity to achieve their object and hence have resorted to the political platforms to make confusion worse confounded. Our greatest thinkers in ancient days considered this blending of the castes as the greatest misfortune that could befall the country and as the greatest sin that one could commit. Arjuna our ideal warrior, the hero of hundred fights, at the stringing of whose bow the world trembled, hesitated in the historic battlefield of Kurukshetra to commence the fight solely because he was afraid to commit the heinous sin of *Varnasankara*, i. e., the blending of the castes. The whole of the Bhagavad Gita which is the holiest of holy books for us is a record of the discussion between Arjuna and Lord Sri Krishna. Even the divine Krishna had to use all his powers of argument and persuasion to induce Arjuna to fight and thereby do his duty. Varnasankara is thus the deadliest of sins from which our mightiest men have recoiled and this same varnasankara is now attempted to be effected by our modern-day so-called patriots. Will they succeed, and will the divine Lord who is ever watchful of the destiny of this great *punya bhumi* of ours suffer this mad downward race after unrighteousness, are problems the solutions of which are to be found only in the lap of Time.

Notes and Comments.

We have all along noted symptoms of a morbid kind and tendencies towards unsoundness of thinking among certain of the men who join the cause of social reform. Their perverted interpretations of texts, their blind imitation of Western modes of dressing and hair-growing, their blind worship of foreigners who come here unsolicited and often play fantastic tricks with men and things in order to glorify themselves, their disregard of all healthy and sane restrictions in the matter of food and drink, their disregard of common sense in the education and treatment of women,—all these and other thoughtless modes of activity originating in the mere impulse of ungovernable passion have shown how unhinged the minds of many modern Indians have been by their contact with modern civilisation in several of its striking manifestations, good and bad. We had always feared that some day it will lead some men at least into strange freaks and aberrations, and that the movement will often be led by men who have fallen a prey to illusions and fancies which we associate with the impressive, though disordered, chivalry of the gallant Knight of La Mancha. That time seems to have come, if we are to judge of the movement by its leading performance at Trichinopoly in the Conference recently held there.

* * *

Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar who presided at the Social Conference has figured before the world frequently enough as another Moses or St. Paul resolved to introduce a new heaven and a new earth into the land which has long waited for him and is now honoured by his advent. But, of late, he

has added by no means an inconsiderable number of cubits to the already overgrown proportions of his apostolic personality. And his Presidential performance at Trichinopoly is the crown and consummation of his growth towards perfection in the exhibition of all those expanding, though erratic, developments of genius which belong to an epoch so full of visionary aspiration, passionate impulse, and sightless activity as the present one in India. Mr. Rajagopalachariar speaks throughout as if he is a veritable Solomon, Amos, or Job, prophesying and threatening us with what is to happen to us all if we disregard his counsels and premonitions. The role of a screeching scold or solemn soothsayer is easy enough for all, and he has evidently attained to it by an assured process of evolution through a strange process of self-discipline. This self-discipline, however, would seem to be effective only so far as his appearance on the platform is concerned,—and not in producing the sacrifices which are involved in the application of his principles to practical life. The world would like to know whether his own "wealth and position" have been made "*equal*" to those of the lowest and poorest individual in South India. Until we receive an assurance in regard to this matter, we are not disposed to place him on a higher level than the one thousand other reformers and apostles we have known in this part of the country.

* * *

Mr. Rajagopalachariar says:—"Western civilisation having reached its summit of possibility by the production of the greatest inequalities of wealth and power, Bolshevism is the last and logically inevitable answer to it. Wherever you unthinkingly work to repeat this feature of Western civilisation, you must ultimately have Bolshevism. Not only so, but wherever you have gross inequalities of any sort, with political awakening Bolshevism must come." We have rarely known of a case where unthinking cant, inexperience, and want of knowledge, has reached such portentous dimensions. Bolshevism is a new morbid symptom of enthroned barbarism in Russia stricken with revolutionary pangs and struggles, bereft of all social organisation, and fallen a prey to intellectual and ethical anarchy. In Russia itself, the majority of thinking men are still sound in their grasp of the meaning of life, and they are being strengthened by the representatives and champions of civilisation from Great Britain, France, and elsewhere. We are informed that Bolshevism is sustaining defeat after defeat, and its game will soon be up. In Germany, Hungary, and elsewhere, civilised and ethical man is fighting against it, too, and with success. Hence, we do not feel any surprise that so erratic an apostle of modern India as Mr. Rajagopalachariar should have come forward to bolster up Bolshevism as the creed and ideal of the future.

* * *

Even the most thorough-going Western socialist or communist has not hitherto enunciated the doctrine of absolute equality of wealth and position for all. Socialistic doctrinaires have advocated the abolition of private property, but not the establishment of absolute equality. For they have adopted such maxims as "to each according to his wants,"—"to each according to his works" &c., in order to regulate the public distribution of the fruits of labour. Absolute equality is a mere figment of a diseased imagination, a symbol of a disordered brain, and absolutely opposed to the methods and tendencies of nature herself. So great a scientist and sound a thinker as the late Professor Huxley insisted on the "natural inequality of men." Absolute equality in wealth and position is unnatural and can only land our race in anarchy and lasting ruin.

* * *

When all this is remembered, we can easily see the absurdity of this South Indian sage's avataric forecast that "there is no guarantee that Britain will always remain non-Bolshevik and Imperialistic." Evidently, the wish is father to the thought. His prophetic vision concerning Britain comes to him because Mr. Rajagopalachariar has by some process of logic or legerdemain known only to himself, come to

the conclusion that the future of the world is meant for the Bolshevik and inseparably associated with the advance of Bolshevism. He is blind—it is he, and not the others to whom he refers, that is behaving like the ostrich in burying his mind's organ of vision in the sand so as to become blind—to the fact that Bolshevism is at its last gasp in Europe. Some degenerate Brahmins of to-day may hug Bolshevism to their heart's embrace for personal, party, or platform purposes. But no thoughtful non-Brahmin or even Panchama,—much less one who has any common sense left to him—will ever take up and proclaim so forlorn a cause as that of Bolshevism. It is not only the fact that Bolshevism is aiming at achieving an impossible social ideal, but it is also immoral in its arrangements regarding the relations of the sexes. We feel quite certain that even if the non-Brahmins (and even Panchamas) of South India give up their present adherence to caste divisions and scruples or even their faith in Hinduism itself of one kind or another, they will never consent to practise immoralities which Bolshevism enforces on the sexes in their relations to each other. It is only a few heated brains that can allow themselves,—in the wild excesses to which their imaginations have surrendered themselves under the false impressions and unthinking impulses of an ordinary agitator's life as we find it among certain circles in South India—to be infatuated by the alluring monstrosities and abominable degradations of Bolshevism.

We shall take up other points in Mr. Rajagopalachariar's address for consideration in a future issue.

Random Jottings.

[By Son of India.]

His Imperial Majesty King George V, by the grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the Colonies and Dependencies thereof in Europe, Asia, Africa, America and Australasia, King, Defender of the Faith—this is the full style and address of His Majesty. Not wishing to be outdone, however, His Majesty's late sub-representative in India—Sir Michael O'Dwyer called himself His Honour, the Honourable Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab and its Dependencies! Bravo, O'Dwyer.

***

Sir Harcourt Butler of the United Provinces appointed a "strong committee of officials" to report on the Joint-Report. It consisted of seven Europeans and one Indian, a Mr. A. C. Chatterjea. On two points there was a divergence of views in the committee which was equally divided. *Our dear* Mr. Chatterjea threw in his lot with minority of the European section and voted against the proposal to establish a standing committee consisting of members elected by the Legislative Council, as also against the proposal to prohibit official members from voting on transferred subjects. This shows probably the psychology of his appointment to the committee. May God save us from such Chatterjeas, our own Chatterjeas in future!

***

Lieutenant-Colonel Beadon's name is not unknown to Indian political circles. During the recent agitation he found that the 1,400 police men in his *Province* were unable to keep the peace, and therefore compulsorily enrolled 14 respectable Indian citizens to serve as special constables. He probably meant it as a compliment to the gentlemen in that where 1,400 had failed, 14 were thought to be able to cope up with the situation. This Lieutenant-Colonel, then, had to report on the Joint-Report. In opposing the establishment of a Privy Council for India, he adduces only one reason—and that a very extraordinary one. Says the Commissioner "I think that we who are of British descent and have always held His Majesty's Privy Council in such respect would be sorry to see created in India, except for very strong reasons indeed, a body having the same name as one composed of the Empire's greatest statesmen. I do not recognise the reason for permitting only Indian members of the projected Privy Council to retain the title of Hon'ble for life."

***

This great administrator considers the interpellations and resolutions as the "froth of Council work." What a pity that such a great genius is kept down. What excellent improvements would he not carry out if only the destinies of the Parliament of England were placed in his hands.

* * *

We shall not leave our friend Sir Michæl yet. He is naturally opposed to the ministers being elected by the Legislative Council. The reason he gives is that the entire business of government is skilled employment and the qualifications for the discharge of it can only be properly judged by those persons who have themselves some share in those qualifications or some practical experience of them. He quotes somewhere from Mill that it is "a most important principle of good government in a popular constitution that no executive functionaries should be appointed by popular election: neither by the votes of the people themselves nor by those of their representatives."—And no wonder that the good Sir Michæl so rode roughshod!

* * *

Sir Michæl is nothing if he is not thoroughly original—it is now an open secret that the credit for the initiative in invoking the help of Martial law on a tremendous scale to quiet a storm in a teapot must be given, and given unreservedly to this gallant knight. Sir Michæl now comes out with another suggestion. The special precedence that is now granted to the members of the Legislative Council under the warrant of precedence should be done away with. "At present it not seldom happens," safely observes the *strong* administrator, "that at functions held at headquarters of divisions the man who ranks highest is not the Commissioner or the local Brigadier but *some obscure pleader who has been elected to the Legislative Council*" (Italics ours). What an edification for the non-official Honourables of his Council!

* * *

The Sastri-Mitter report, miscalled the Rowlatt Report, opens with the grave charge that India is not fit for self-government on the ground that "Republican or Parliamentary forms of Government as at present understood were neither known, nor desired in India till after the establishment of British rule." The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Justice C. V. Kumarasami Sastri, a member of the Committee, followed this up with a vigorous article in the *Indian Review* denouncing the ancient institutions of India. They have been sufficiently repudiated by, among others, Sir Sankaran Nair in his admirable minute of dissent. But it is curious to find a member of the Heaven-born Indian Civil Service who has been, according to his own account, Chief Secretary to two Lieutenant Governors without Council, a member of the Executive Council of two Governors, one of whom had formerly been a liberal member, and the other a conservative member of the House of Commons, and now the head of an administration without a Council, being far from being an out-and-out supporter of Council as opposed to personal "Government though he recognises however that as a matter of practical politics—some form of collective administration must be set up in the eight provinces"—Comment is needless.

The Bhagavad Gita.

With an English Exposition
By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.
(The substance of the lectures now being delivered at the Students' Sanatana Dharma Sabha Trichinopoly.)

ADHYAYA III.

(Continued.)

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।
निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युद्ध्यस्व विगतज्वरः ॥

Do thy work of fighting, surrendering unto me all actions, with thy mind realising that thou art the servant of God, free from attachment to result and from a desire of selfish possession, and free from burning grief and anxiety.

Notes:

1. The realisation that God has His

purposes achieved through us is one of the great liberators from sin and bondage. We are His servants and we must do our duty as His servants. He is the *Antaryamin*. अन्तःप्रविष्टः शास्ता जनानां सर्वात्मा. See also Gita XVIII, 61. Our illusion of our being कर्ता will be overcome by this means. This is consistent with the further realisation that the real agents in work are the mind, the senses, and the body, the soul being साक्षी and Sachidananda. A further realisation is the realisation of its identity with Paramatma. Much confusion of thought arises when we utter all these realisations without realising their interconnection and gradation. The immediate agents in work are Prakriti Gunas; and the ultimate agent is God, who is the Lord of Prakriti. So long as we are under the illusion of the soul being the doer and enjoyer and do not realise that the soul is *sakshi* and *sachidananda*, we are bound to the wheel of *samsara*. The realisations above-said free us from such illusion. The Lord is in no way affected by our actions because He is like rain bringing each seed unto fruition and fulfilment according to its true and essential nature.

2. Only when we realise these truths we will be inclined to surrender the fruits of actions to God and pray that He may scatter the blessed results of the actions broadcast over the world for the joy of mankind. The torture of the selfish prayer of individual happiness will leave us only then. The mere intellectual assent to the doctrine that the Prakriti gunas are the real agents in work is of no use. Our illusion is too strong to be destroyed by a mere intellectual assent. The doing of duties irrespective of consequences and by way of carrying out His commandments to win His grace slowly generates our intense realisation of our true nature. The conquest of illusion is only by such means and by none other. To such a soul full of *sraddha* and striving God gives the bliss of realisation. If you rely on God and realise that He is the real agent in human actions His grace will give the fulness of *jnana*. The importance of such faith is taught in the following verses.

ये मे मतामिदं नित्यमनुतिष्ठान्ति मानवाः ।
श्रद्धावन्तोऽनसूयन्तो मुच्यन्ते तेऽपि कर्मभिः ॥

Those men who follow this teaching of mine ceaselessly, full of faith and free from cavil, they also are freed from the bondage of actions.

NOTES:

1. Three grades of Godwardness are indicated here; Follow His teachings; at least have faith; in any event do not cavil. These persons though below the jnanayogi are all wending Godward.

2. Such is the importance of *sraddha* or faith. The Lord emphasises this in Chapter IV verses 39—40.

3. The Agneya Purana says :—

श्रुतिमात्ररसाः सूक्ष्माः प्रधानपुरुषेश्वराः ।
श्रद्धामात्रेण गृह्यन्ते न करेण न चक्षुषा ॥
श्रद्धा धर्मः परः सूक्ष्मः श्रद्धा ज्ञानं हुतं तपः ।
श्रद्धा स्वर्गश्च मोक्षश्च श्रद्धा सर्वमिदं जगत् ॥

4. What is *sraddha*? शास्त्राचार्योपदिष्टेऽर्थेऽननुभूतेऽप्येवमेवैतदिति विश्वासः (Madhusoodana).

5. Quite opposed to it is Asuya (असूया). It is गुणेषु दोषाविष्करणं (saying that good qualities are really defects, trying to prove that what are pronounced to be auspicious are causes of our undoing, denying the truth of virtues, etc.). Hiranyakasipu was the worst of cavillers and sceptics and athiests. So was Sisupala. Such souls cannot rise to the Supreme.

6. Faith is not opposed to reason. Reason belongs to the world of the senses. Faith is the instrument of realisation and the organ of truth in the super-sensuous world. That the mind and the senses are the real agents is *clear to us from reason* (*Samkhya*). That God is the ultimate agent is the *declaration of faith*. That God and soul are one in bliss is the *realisation*.

7. *Asuya* is also described as परोत्कर्षासहिष्णुत्वं (inability to put up with the superiority of another). If one will not accept the glory and power of God but cavils at him and disobeys His laws, there is no hope for him.

8. The faith that leads to hatred of other religions or men is not faith; it is *ahamkara*. Pure faith increases our love of God and man and always takes us nearer to God-realisation.

(*To be continued.*)

Musings from the Maharatta Capital.

(OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

Forerunners of the Messiah.

John the Baptist was preaching in the wilderness of Judea: He was the forerunner of Jesus Christ and said "Prepare ye, for the Kingdom of God is at hand" Now we have the forerunners of *Kalki*, (कलिकुल-नाशावतार:) the coming Avatar, the destroyer of Kali Kula (கலிகுலம்): These are the agents of *Kali* who is busy setting perverse brains in many a place to preach and prate, and create a stir in the peaceful world, to pave the way for the coming of the Messiah. And when does the Messiah Avatar? "Vice should triumph, and Virtue Vice obey"; *Dharma* should deteriorate and be dethroned, Adharma should increase and be installed: *Then* appears the Avatar,

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥

Well then! what are the respective positions of Dharma and Adharma now? Unless they interchange and exchange places, the Messiah cannot come: But He is bound to come; He is also affected by the law of Karma which is all-supreme and all-embracing. Cf. Bhartrihari:

विष्णुर्येन दशावतारगहने क्षिप्तो महासंकटे ।
......तस्मै नमः कर्मणे ॥

Dasama Avatara is at hand: Our John the Baptists are appearing and appealing to *upset Dharma, and to set up Adharma*, for then alone the kingdom of social and political salvation will be assured: if political elevation is the end, social depression must be the means, for there is no elevation without a depression or *vice versa* and this is exactly what our agents of Kali are trying to bring about. The end justifies the means. Considerations of good and evil, of virtue and vice, of shame and honour, of sense and non-sense, of purity and impurity etc., etc., have no place in this process of end shaping the means. The question never strikes these wonderful creatures of the creation whether the desired end is worth achieving at the expense of the proposed means of a suicidal character or can only be achieved by this process alone and no other. But the poet truly says:—

कामार्ता हि प्रकृतिकृपणाश्चेतनाचेतनेषु ॥

Persons under the sway of Kama are by nature blind to the effects of their deed and cannot afford to have the common sense to distinguish between the animate and inanimate, the practicable and the impracticable, cannot command the patience to realise the magnitude of mischievous effects which would result in the end by ill-considered and hasty words and deeds.

But, dear Editor, in my musings, I forget myself: World suffers from Ravana; Rama must come, Ravana must go, Vice should be trodden under foot, Virtue should rear up her lofty head and rule in earth in all her majesty. But how can all this consummation be reached except on a carefully conceived plan? Now India suffers from *Adharma*, Kalki must come, Adharma must go, Sanatana Varnasrama Dharma must be revived in all its beauty and beneficience; but we must have our agents of Ravana, Marichas etc., our Kaikeyis and Mantharas, to produce that kind of combination of events which would yield the desired result. But haven't we got them now? Yes, certainly, they are legion. Who are these, but our Social Reformers, our political saviours? Ministers and Secretaries of State, statesmen and politicians, and public men and public bodies are not tired of proclaiming that if India is to reach her goal and take her place in the modern comity of nations, she must baptise herself in holy waters and holy ghosts, she must become the unlikeness of herself if she wants to be like others, she must give up her manliness and virtues, her spirituality and sociology, her

traditions and culture, her customs and civilisation, her language and literature, her distinctiveness and individuality, her honour and self-respect, in a word, all her own, if she wants to be drowned in the shapelessness of modern league of nations worshipping at the altar of heartless and militant theatrical civilisation with its fleeting flash and iconoclastic ideals. To refer only to recent and current utterences, Mr. Montagu hopes that with the disappearance of provoking social disabilities and caste customs, India must be well on the road to progressive realisation of self-government; Lord Sinha of Raipur solemnly warns our audience in England that if India is to advance, she must decidedly change herself in her social outlook and build; the Government of India have shown their bias in the matter by their treatment so far given to the Inter-Caste-Marriage Bill; Mr Surendra Nath Banerjee in a suppliant mood tells the Parliamentary Joint Committee in his evidence that his countrymen in Bengal have given up all desire for the caste-maintenance and the little difficulty that might still exist might be wiped by suitable social legislation carried out by self-governing India. Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar forecastes as a witness before the same Joint-Committee that caste will exist for some time and then wend its way into oblivion. This kind of list is endless to narrate in a brief article, but what is said above is enough to show the ruling spirit of our modern-day saviours. In their anxiety to get something politically which even may after all turn out a *Vision of Tantalus*, they are selling their birthrights, their conscience, their love of country and religion, in fact whatever there is worth having for a mess of pottage. The late Raja Sir T. Madhava Row that pre-eminent Statesman said that he is a patriot who has cultivated a confirmed tendency to defend his own, to hold to the rights and never to barter them in a flimsy and huckstering spirit: The late Justice Sir T. Muthuswami Aiyar warned, in the fulness of his wisdom, never to hesitate to proudly assert "I am an Indian, a Hindu, a gentleman, just as every Englishman calls himself an Englishman, and a gentleman above all." The above may not be the very words of the great men but they express their views faithfully. I only write from memory. Just compare these with our modern experience! What a humiliating and sorry spectacle! My countrymen! What an ignominous figure we are cutting and how stupid a laughing-stock of the world we are becoming! Indeed, all our stamina and sublimity, virtues and virility have left us! Is there no hope of redemption! Is there not a single dozen among the millions of Hindus who by combined and effective organisation and action can counteract the pernicious influences and effects? Is this ancient land of the Rishis, is this *Punya Bhumi* of eternity deplete altogether of the right type of venerable and high-souled men? I pause for a response.

Coming nearer to very recent events, the Presidential speech at the Provincial Social Conference at Trichinopoly beats all record. Is it amazing? Or is it amusing a portion of the Trichy audience disgusted apparently with any surfeit of politics in the political Conference? When compared with the usual class of utterances on Social Reform Topics by individuals and associations for a long number of years, the present speech is *par* excellence. Its diagnosis of the situation is very accurate and thorough. The remedy is equally effective and practical. The speech abounds in gems from start to finish. Here is a daring piece of advice which, it is presumed, was heartily swallowed by the patient audience. The extract will bear full quotation by reason of its trancendent splendour. "My prognosis is grave. But there is the remedy. It is simple though very hard. If you belong to any of the upper castes and believe there is something superior or beautiful or pure in your caste, hesitate not to sacrifice it, we must go down and fuse with the other brothers of our motherland, yield your purity, your beauty or your superiority for the common benefit; for you should realise and remember, that your caste has no separate life, it has no separate government or country and it is bound to perish in the red struggle that is inevitable. The only assured entity is the common nationality of our country, and

what is pure or superior in our own caste is of no consequence and must be yielded up to the common account by intermixture and intermarriage..........But our nation even in the lowest strata is truly religious and restrained by a clear sense of the moral law, and we may be saved from the disaster of Europe. While therefore one remedy lies in ourselves hastening to break down the caste inequalities while yet it may not be too late—it is a race with the political awakening-the other equally necessary step is the conservation of our true and ancient religion from a simultaneous break down.........". I regret I cannot reproduce the whole here for want of space, though it is a valuable gem, a worthy present to the readers of the 'MESSAGE'. The audacious but absurd nature of the *advice* to reduce beauty to ugliness, to degrade purity into impurity, does but *add* to the already existing *vices*. If you have something superior and another something inferior, make the superior inferior, but not the inferior superior. If your limbs are alright, but if your neighbours are like Surpanakhas, transform yourself into your neighbour. If you wear decent shawls and dress and if you see any in another caste wearing rags, do not help him into wearing a decent dress, but tear your shawls into pieces and exult that both you and he are in the same boat. One should have thought that the general tendency is to make low high, is to help up to the uppermost rungs from below, is to elevate one from depression by lifting him up, but never to fall down into depths oneself and delight in a common destiny thus wonderfully secured. If you do not frequent the taverns and if thereby you consider yourself in possession of a superior quality and if you see your brother of another caste revelling in the brothel and rolling on the roadside and consider it undesirable, go down and fuse with him and roll on the road and welter in the gutters. Then alone you will be rendering common benefit, you will be making sacrifice for the uplift of India as a nation, progressing fair and fast to reach the intended goal! Ha! Ha! What a glittering and priceless variety of a gem of advice to foolish mankind!! Whether speeches like these are faithful expressions of what are really meant or are of the nature of locquacious pastimes, it is hard to divine. But later comes the paradox. Break inequalities of caste, but let there be no breakdown of our ancient Aryan religion which is the only one worth possessing lest a terrible catastrophe should overtake all the classes. Conserve it. It, what? The *true* religion of the Aryans.

All this absurdity of views and words is the outcome of a misreading of the whole scheme of Hinduism; it is the necessary corollary of a misconceived notion that Hindu Castes have nothing to do with Hindu Religion, as if they came at some period out of circumstances entirely unconnected with Hindu religion, as if they are independent of it and they can now take leave and disappear: But this institution of caste persists in its existence all these thousands of years on a pretext of divine origin and claims to have been born, bred and brought up in the same cradle of Hindu religion even from the time of the Vedas, the beginningless and endless.

I would ask people of this sort of views and advocacy whether they believe at all in anything Hindu. Do they believe in the Vedas? Do they accept *Sri Krishna* universally understood as *Gita-Acharya*? Do they at all believe in any Hindu sacred writings and scriptures? Do they believe at all in the Hindu ideals of life—in the unique spiritual goal of human life, unlike the commercial political goals of all the other nations on this God's earth? If they believe in the Vedas, do these not explain the origin of caste? But who is to have the mind and the time to read and learn and interpret, properly but not perversely? If they believe in Lord Sri Krishna does He not say in the *Gita*,

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मयासृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।

Why should castes be based on the classification into *Gunas and Karma*, if they were to commingle? Where is the significance of such an institution? If they believe in Arjuna that master-mind, devotee and friend of Sri Krishna, does he not shudder at the very prospect of *Varna Sankara*, alive, to the train of evils

resulting therefrom, such as unchastity of women, illegitimate progeny, Kula-kshaya, (कुलक्षय), Dharma-nasa (धर्मनाश); and *Adhogati* (अधोगति) also which should be the inevitable end of mankind as it seems to one. No more hellish theme can be harped upon by any claiming to be a Hindu. Yet the Hindu religion, it is said, must be conserved. Without this caste, there is no Hindu religion and this cannot survive the extinction of the former. With the caste gone, the religion gone, the Hindus must be a miserable piece of humanity comparable only to the street rubbish fit to be disposed of in any Incinerator, in contradistinction to the position assigned to the Brahmans by Manu, as the pioneers of human activities, as educators of mankind.

एतद्देशप्रभूतस्य सकाशादग्रजन्मनः ।
स्वं स्वं चरितं शिक्षेरन् पृथिव्यां सर्वे मानवाः ॥

The fusion of castes is one of the panaceas recommended for serious adoption for political emancipation, but the Hindu religion must not break down and the Brahmana is still admitted like the accredited agent of it. Where is *the Brahmana* in the fusion-scheme? Where is the religion? Where is not its breakdown then? Where is the guarantee that fusion of castes will put an end to all our ills? What has happened to the Christian nations and parties to the recent world-war who know of no caste! Are there no social troubles there? No social inequalities there? Why then this wild cry in India for caste extinction? Will these men ever learn to mind their own political business leaving questions of sociology best to itself, with a thorough conviction that caste does in no way impede their so-called political goal but is extremely helpful; and has been intended by the Almighty for the fulfilment of a distinct spiritual purpose and has not been intended for man to *mend and mar*. Hinduism without caste is body without life and soul, temple without God, marriage without தாலிகட்டல் or exchange of rings, garland, or clasping of hands or whatever represents the function among different peoples. And yet caste must go, religion must be conserved!!!

Another outstanding social evil which impedes political progress and oneness into a nation is the institution of *early marriages*. No body seems to know yet what exactly this expression means. If by 'marriages' is meant, the consummation popularly known amongst us as nuptials (நிஷேக முகூர்த்தம்), the institution is practically free from blame and the attack means beating in the air. If on the other hand, it means the Vivaha and Panigrahana ceremony this is only a preparation for the householder's and housewife's life to commence in the fulness of time. The interval between the two is a period of probation, apprentice and training—all needed and planned with a view to achieve the *spiritual* goal of the race each according to his or her deserts and *karma*. No sane and sober Hindu who has a respect for his past, for the Rishis, for the facts and ideals underlying the Hindu scheme need object to this institution of early marriages. It is no argument that can stand any investigation to say that other nations are acting otherwise. If so, it is their ideal, and our institutions are shaped according to our ideals. Further, practicability does not enter into these social reform creeds. The climatic conditions are ignored, the tendency of human nature is lost sight of. Even from early period of a life's career, tendencies towards lust are manifest,—a natural instinct which must have its natural course, especially in these days when all thought of spirituality, restraint of social discipline, fear of God etc., etc., are at a minimum. People, with experiences opposite to what is preached though, talk and talk in theory; for they know the easiest thing in the world is to *advise* not *adopt*. If these natural instincts and developments of men and women in the Topics are not taken note of and if institutions of marriage run counter to the above, undesirable results and ugly practices come into vogue. It is better to provide suitable outlets for the free and natural flow instead of damming up and diverting into unworthy and useless channels. Institutions of the West are based on their climatic conditions and on the nature of their natural ideals—(political and commercial advancement

from exploitation of the weak by the strong.) Our institutions are according to our climate and goal—(the spiritual realisation of God in man.) Where is the comparison? It does not require more than an iota of common sense and self-respect to recognise this simple fact: but it is blinded by slavish imitation and an attempt at aping the West. The argument is advanced that because of early marriages, child-widows abound and are not allowed the benefit of plural marriages. Believing, as the Hindus do in the doctrine of Karma, the widows bear their fate with willing endurance with a conviction of a life beyond and a redemption in the long cycle of life and death, sometime or other: They have been taught by hereditary instincts to view their position in this noble and dignified way. That is a sacrifice which they are intended to make and do make even now, in spite of unsettling pernicious propaganda of the modern day; and it is a sacrifice far better and nobler than the sacrifices recommended in the Presidential speech of the Social Conference referred to above, and it is made for a spiritual benefit and merit. If child widows abound here, *old-maids* abound elsewhere. Is it all a paradise there? Are there no social problems there again? Are there no divorce cases off and on? Was not some Bishop's meeting in England held a year or two ago considering the question as to how the daily increasing immoral practices among girls might be best curbed? The Western society is simply seething with social and matrimonial undesirabilities and is certainly the least of the types to be looked forward to as a model if at all a model were necessary. Even the Editor of the Hindu from his experiences of the recent tour as a Press Deputation member has admitted that our womanhood stands on a superior footing. Our girls are each assured at least the boon of a marriage as a matter of necessity whereas many in the West may die old maids, whether with or without clean conscience, in all cases, it is hard to say. Let us not therefore waste our time and lungs, money and materials on these questions which are best established as suitable to the country and for all time, by the blessed Rishis of old, after a thorough investigation of the laws of nature and man. Will the social reformers and others of that way of thinking revise their views again in calm moments, realising their duty by God and country? Will they learn to work with a clear conscience, without confounding the ideals of the races and issues at stake?

If at all any section of humanity is equipped with institutions which harmonise with the laws and lessons of Nature, it is the Hindu Aryan race. The society is built on the model of the human body, the belly and the numbers are working together for the common benefit of the whole. There is no quarrel among them as to precedence, superiority or inferiority. Head remains where it is, foot remains where it is, other organs are nailed to their respective positions. They never quarrel that they must change places and functions and they know of the inevitable result—as every schoolboy knows of the story. Likewise, the Hindu society has got the functions and places of each of its castes recognised and allotted, spiritual comforts, political comforts, industrial pursuits and distribution, each meant to work with and for the other for the common weal of the whole body politic. There has been no difficulty in the past and up to a very recent past. The machinery has been disorganised and is not in a good working order. Necessary repairs have to be made but the axe is not to be aimed at the roots to level the machinery to the ground. This is what our Social Reform friends persist in attempting to achieve, evidently to no purpose. The machinery will rather work even in disorganised condition true to its Creator, than consent to such a dangerous fatal remedy being applied.

Even as regards marriages, nature must appeal to us as a model. Viewing broadly the natural divisions in the universe, there are the human species, the brute species, the bird species etc., etc., All beasts are not of one and the same type, all birds are neither. Men are not all the same, all the world over so far as their modes of life on earth are concerned. Birds and

beasts do not mix outside of their species. Why should man alone seek to be ambitious and go against Nature? Is it because he is endowed with *reason*? But Reason has got its limitations and uses. Where it is perverse, it had better be ignored.

It is folly to be wise, where ignorance is bliss indeed; let us, gentlemen of the MESSAGE, persuade all concerned to look at things like *men*, true to our ancient religion, land, *laws* and ideals.

Sri Sankaracharya and the "Karma Marga."

[BY N. K. VENKATESAN.]

I.

During the past few years the celebration of Sri Sankara Jayanti on the fifth day of the month of Vaisakha has been fairly general over the whole of this Presidency and also in several parts of the whole continent of India. The motive for this celebration may be said to be a general and growing desire among our educated men to keep fresh and hallowed in our memories the life and work of our great Jagadguru Sri Sankaracharya. The desire for such celebration entered the minds of our educated men, when, by the teachings of the various new movements in India and especially by the tenets of the latest of such movements, namely, the Theosophical society, educated people came to hear of, study and understand the system of thought established by Sir Sankaracharya, viz., the Vedanta system or the advaitic system, spread broadcast over the inimitable commentaries of the great avatar of Isvara, on the Prasthana Traya and other valuable portions of our Sacred Literature. The result of this new phase of our religious life in which we exhibit yearly so much enthusiasm on the day of the avatara of Sri Sankara, is that year after year a larger and larger section of our people is being drawn to the study of the Vedanta Philosophy established by Sri Sankaracharya. The one great effect of the introduction of all the neo-religious, revivalist movements, as they are said to be, in India is that the interpretation of the source and the course of thought in our scriptures has so far gone away from our orthodox interpretation, that quite naturally, in consequence, very curious conclusions as regards life and its purpose and very strange and sometimes astounding courses of action are said to be based on the very teachings of the Vedanta, which in the past inspired quite a different and even opposite course of action. This diversion of thought and principles of action among us at present must necessarily be attributed to the fact, to the undeniable fact, that the interpretation of any text varies with the mental capacity of the reader of the text. The principle involved in this is what is known as *adhikara* in the Hindu canons. Speaking of *adhikari* for the study of the Vedas and for the performance of the Yagnas laid down in the Vedas, Sri Vidyaranyaswami, the great commentator of the Vedas says that the question of *adhikari*, one fit for the study of the Vedas and for the performance of the rites enjoined in them is a vital consideration and he makes, according to the orthodox method, the question of *adhikari* one of the four *anubandhas*, namely, the subject-matter, the purpose, the fit person, and the sambandha. So also, the very first sutra in the Vedanta sutras begins with the words "atha" (अथ) and "atah" (अतः) which mean that the enquiry into Brahman the subject of the Vedanta follows the adhikara obtained by the enquiring student from previous studies, Vaidika Karmas etc., as the result of which he has obtained, what is most essential for starting the study of Vedanta, viz., Sadhanachatushtaya, the four Sadhanas. It is after obtaining these four Sadhanas, that a student becomes fit for the study of the Vedanta, that is, for the inquiry into the nature of Brahman. The very first sutra at once gives the *adhikari* for the student of Vedanta. The sutra does not speak here of the adhikari for Brahma-Sakshatkara, or realisation, but for Brahma Jignasa or enquiry into the nature of Brahman, that is to say, for the study of the portion of the Hindu theological literature known as the Vedanta, in general. Thus by the first sutra, the adhikari for the study of the Vedanta is fixed to be one who has got *Sadhana-Chatushtaya*. The end of the Vedanta is to create in the enquiring student *Brama-gnana*, the conception of the Divine absolute Brahman, thus paving the way for his later meditation on that form and for his realisation of what is involved in that conception. The development of the Self or Atman follows a somewhat curious path in the realisation of

Brahman, according to the Hindu practice. The boy at seven is initiated into the "upasana" of gayatri, the Veda-mata and he is made to perform rites, without knowledge of their meanings, whatever our modern critics may say as regards the advisability or the rationality of this method; and the youth, as he grows, is offered various opportunities to acquaint himself with the meanings of these rites and of the mantras and the tantras involved in these rites. He has his atman growing within him and getting more and more purified day after day by the performance of religious rites and by the samskaras undergone in accordance with the shastras, at the proper times. Manu says:—

स्वाध्यायेन व्रतैर्होमैस्त्रैविद्येनेज्यया सुतैः ।

महायज्ञैश्च यज्ञैश्च ब्राह्मयं क्रियते तनुः ॥

"By performance of Vaidika Karmas, the *body* is prepared for *Brahma gnana*" We have necessarily to understand that the body is prepared for Brahmagnana by the Sadhana-Chatushtaya, obtained by the performance of Vaidika Karmas. The very first words of the very first sutra of the Vedanta sutras, which contain the essence of all Vedantic teaching relating to the Nature of Brahman, is a positive bar to our proceeding further with the study of the Vedanta sutras, which we consider to be our first and foremost duty in order to understand Hinduism. A perusal next of the second and the third sutras must at once have the effect of driving us away from the pursuit of the study of the Vedanta. The Brahman, upon an enquiry into whose nature, we propose to enter in the Vedanta sutras and the Vedanta Shastra in general, we are told, is to be known as the beginning and the end or as the beginner and the ender of this whole Prapancha or Brahma-anda. The main pramana or authority for our getting a true knowledge of Brahman is the *shastra* or the "srutis and the smritis," as Manu says.

श्रुतिस्मृत्युदितं धर्मम्

"the sources of Dharma are the sruti and the smriti."

As the sruti and the smriti give origin and force to *Dharma*, as the enquiry into "Dharma" is the subject of "Purva mimamsa" and the aim of the Karmakanda, as the knowledge of Dharma and the practice of the Vaidika karmas in accordance with Dharma is the means for preparing the body for Brahma-gnana, by means of Sadhana Chatushtaya; and as the enquiry into Brahman, the subject matter of the uttara kanda or the gnana kanda, is the way to the meditation on and realisation of Brahman, we are perforce led to the conclusion that the study of the Vedanta is the last but one step in the ladder of spiritual evolution and not as we consider now, the first and the foremost step to understand Hinduism and to know and take pride in its greatness and its eternity. It is on this principle that we make the little boy of seven start with the performance of Vaidika karma and the guru slowly initiates him in the right knowledge of the nature of Dharma, the significance of the rites and the meanings of the mantras, all contained and expressed in the Vedas and the shastras themselves. Thus with the growth of knowledge based upon practice, the boy proceeds in his grahastha ashrama to perform all the rites and sacrifices enjoined on him, *with* the knowledge of their significance. Vidyaranya in a pretty long and closely argumentative discourse says that the knowledge relating to Vaidika karma is very essential for the proper performance of the rites and he says that the Veda is fit to be commented on because it says throughout that one who does all the rites laid down in the Vedas, knowing their meanings,

य एवं वेद

prepares himself for "Moksha." The word **य एवं वेद**, Vidyaranya says, is so often repeated to show that the knowledge of the meaning of the karma we perform is a part of the performance of the karma itself. To know the meanings of the rites and the mantras, there are various means and methods all expressed and implied in the Vedas themselves. The grihastha comes to his house with all this knowledge imparted to him by his guru and continues to perform karma. Thus the Shastra leads the Dvija to the performance of karma with the knowledge of its significance and to put it shortly, he duly gets Sadhana-chathustaya. With this perparation he now starts on an enquiry into the nature of Brahman, because Brahman is the cause of the shastras and is also known by and from the shastras.— शास्त्रयोनित्वात् . This enquiry—started, after obtaining sadhanachatushtaya and because

of his being ready to start on his new line of enquiry, basing all his further enquiry on the pramana of the shastras of which he is master—leads him on to the knowledge of Brahman, to the meditation of Brahman and to the realisation of Brahman in his own atman in the due course. He comes then to the final steps of the ladder, represented by the Mahavakyas. He meditates on the the lakshana or the svarupa of Brahman, enjoys the Brahman in himself, gets the happiness and realises himself at last.

The main steps therefore by which a *Dvija* rises to all this eminence in the spiritual world are the performance of Vaidika karma and the knowledge of shastras, viz. the *Srutis* and the *Smritis*. The Adhikari for doing these is clearly indicated in the shastras themselves. Manu says that the Dvija is the *adhikari* for the Vaidika karma and among the Dvijas he says that the Brahmana, who is a Vidvamsa, is inferior to a Brahmana who has the mind to perform karmas; that he is again inferior to a Brahmana who *does* his karma and to him too is superior that Brahmana who knows the nature of Brahman.

ब्राह्मणेषु च विद्वांसो विद्वत्सु कृतबुद्धयः ।
कृतबुद्धिषु कर्तारः कर्तृषु ब्रह्मवेदिनः ॥

It may be observed that here Manu says that a Brahma-Vedi is the best *among* those that perform *karma* 'कर्तृषु' Thus Manu says exactly what Vidyaranya says, that one who does Vaidika karma *with* the knowledge of its significance is the ideal kept in view by the Veda, when it often repeats, य एवं वेद.

(*To be continued.*)

Olla Podrida.

Quite recently a new food has been discovered. It is rice-polish as opposed to polished rice. The rich eat the core of the rice and get diabetes. The poor eat the outer cover which is nutritious along with the flour of other grains and keep their bodies for a long time. This is a nice division! taste to the rich, longivity to the poor!

* * *

America became dry from the midnight of June 1919. How long will she continue so, I wonder? England however refuses to become dry.

* * *

In the daily newspapers the great battle of B. V. N. B. is going on in regard to the selection of Munsiffs. When will the Peace Conference begin to sit?

* * *

The Indian Social Reformer observed recently that it was a matter for congratulation that the Theosophical Society has ceased to coquet with orthodoxy or sit on the fence but has come over and joined the reform party. Can any one explain this *volte face*?

* * *

Did you read Kincaid's 'The Indian Heroes' which is one of the School Final text books this year? Its story-telling is as ridiculous as its pictures and both are as outlandish as its atmosphere. Happy are the boys who read such books and patriotic are text book prescribers who prescribe such books for the boys!

* * *

Miss Bromley said a few days ago that white women are less respected now owing "to the indiscriminate showing of films on social and marriage problems." That is however their business. The following statement is however lamentably true: "The natives are great film enthusiasts and there are fourteen picture-houses in Bombay alone. They will sit right through all the parts of a serial film from dawn to dusk."

* * *

The Hon'ble Mr. Raja was entertained a few days ago and proved also to be entertaining. He asked how many Paracheris the Hon'ble Mr. T. V. Seshagiri Iyer, the President of the Social Service League had visited and how many Panchamas he had dined with. So he has already begun to interpellate! Very good indeed.

* * *

The Madras Mail dated 23-8-1919 contains a very interesting letter from London about the W. R. A. F. Did you read it? If not, do read it, please. The Air Force girls have been having a nice time of it. We have heard about the gospel of co-education. We now hear about the joys of co-expedition. Adam and Eve on æroplanes!

* * *

Recently the Police Act came up in England to be beaten into shape on the

legislative anvil. The question—great and momentous and vital—arose whether the Police uniform could be allowed to be used in plays and pantomimes. One Right Honourable thought that this was a case of *lese majeste*. Is the Police uniform to be desecrated by suck a scurvy use? His blood boiled. Then sprang up a Labour M. P. He said that he had derived exquisite delight as a boy when seeing the Policeman knocked about—of course only in patomime; and he pleaded the cause of the boys who should not be deprived of such a pure source of pleasure. Hurrah! Mother of Parliaments.

***

It seems that in Norway if a couple seek divorce a conciliation board tries to make them boards and that then a court fences separation if conciliation is impossible. What ingeneous devices to get over the law of Christ! In Switzerland a gentleman married his own wife four times. What an original man!

***

The Chettynad is in a blaze of festivity. Every variety of eatables and drinkables came in abundance. The entire Bank of Madras turned up to achieve victory against them. Which is better—Celebrity or Celebration?

***

At the recent Trichy Social Conference four wonderful discoveries were made by its great President:

I. Caste leads Bolshevism. If caste goes Bolshevism will go. If caste is, Bolshevism will be. Query: How long has caste been here and when did its effect begin and why? One solution is that the effect was due to social conferences and will go when these go.

II. Reform of caste should begin in schools and colleges to undo the evil work of caste at home. So Mr C. R. is going to use the schools and colleges in a new way. That will perhaps be when the Neo-Hindu University comes into existence.

III. Effect marriage reform? Why? So that our girls may have "romping overflowing health." I am quoting his own words. Romping and overflowing—mixed thought and mixed metaphor wonderfully mixed up. Why not have graceful and self-controlled health due to regulated marital life, purity, continence, and divine worship? No, I want romping, over-flowing health. What rot!

IV. Force Government to legislate. So Mr. C. R. has discovered this also. Why? The reformed Councils are coming and Mr. C. R. can ride his hobby to death there.

***

Meantime Satyamurthi writes from England talking in very graceful terms about the "humiliating sight" of seeing Surendra Nath Banerjee kneeling "as a suppliant" praying pathetically for the Bill. The Editor of the *New India* is exhausting all Billingsgate on Satyamurthi. Mrs. A. B. has after all discovered that she is unpopular in India. But she is as hard "at work" as ever—to do what?

***

Just think of the patriotic insight that has induced the Editor of *New India* to suggest that some temperance league should invite Pussyfoot Johnson to come and make India dry. We have had a Miss Tennant to tell us how and when we should get our daughters married. We have had a host of cranks of both sexes to tell us how to reach God. We now stand in need of a Pussyfoot to teach us to become dry. What next?

***

Such is our indebtedness, fancied or real, to the West. How is the West getting on in the meanwhile? Let us take the domestic servant problem. The old name 'maid' has been banished for the new name 'house assistant'. Here is an adverstisement that speaks for itself:

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